

P-0204
CONDUCT AN AFTER ACTION REVIEW

CONDITIONS

You are the leader of a ground team that has just completed a sortie, either actual or training. Debrief and team refit are complete. You now wish to review the team's performance to determine future training requirements.

OBJECTIVE

Successfully conduct a review that fosters individual participation, and determines the team's training strengths and weaknesses with respect to the sortie conducted. Records the results of the review for use in planning future training.

TRAINING AND EVALUATION

Training Outline

1. The After Action Review, or review, is a group activity that allows all members of the group to work together to review a mission sortie or training event. The purpose is to determine those things the team does well (and should *sustain*) and those things the team needs to *improve* in.
2. The review is a group process. If the leader just stands up and tells everyone else what happened, and no one else talks, it is not a review -- it's just a lecture.
3. The review is more than just a group discussion. The leader facilitates the review by leading a discussion of the events and activities that focuses on the training objectives. The discussion should orient on what the team did, what the members did, and what the leaders did, relating these actions to the outcome of the mission and to training objectives (such as the tasks in this book). This discussion should also address the functionality of equipment used by the team. At the close, the review leader summarizes the discussion, covering strengths and weaknesses discussed during the review and what the team needs to do to fix the weaknesses.
4. The leader must make sure the discussion focuses on what the team did, not what higher headquarters or other units did. Remember, the purpose is to help train your unit -- not someone else's.
5. To successfully conduct a review, the leader must:

a. **PLAN.**

1) Establish objectives for the review -- what do you want to accomplish? If your unit just completed a Crash Site Surveillance sortie, then your main objective would be to review the conduct of the surveillance. If you had more time, you might also wish to review how the team alerted and the drive to the site went. You decide on the objectives prior to the review, and keep the discussion within those objectives.

2) Choose the review Site -- pick a place that is comfortable, with adequate light, and protection from the elements if possible. Reviews should not be conducted with the team standing in formation -- it will quickly turn in to a lecture.

3) Select Training Aids -- determine what "props" you need. A map is always handy. A blackboard or white board can be used to draw pictures of how the team moved through an area, or to record the

results of the review. You should always have the appropriate publications on hand (ground team handbook, CAPM 50-15, etc.) that discuss the correct way of doing whatever the team just did.

b. PREPARE

1) Review The Training Objectives And Objectives - Write down what the purpose of the exercise was. (For example "To practice hasty search and first aid"). Then look through your reference publications to make sure you know what the objectives are.

2) Review your notes and the team log- If you took any notes during the exercise or sortie, review them to refresh you memory as to what happened (or at least what you observed -- other team members may add things during the review that you never noticed).

3) Develop an outline -- decide on how you want to lead your team through the discussion. Base your outline on this one:

a) Introduction

b) Present the Mission - What was your team supposed to do. Use the sortie briefing.

c) Summary of Events -- What happened, chronologically, during the sortie?

d) Discussion of Key Issues -- the things that made the mission a success (or failure).

e) Analysis -- in terms of:

- **Command** -- Was direction from upper echelons apparent? Did command staff members assist teams in completing tasks as necessary?

- **Operations** -- Was the appropriate resource used for the task? If combined resources were necessary to complete the tasks assigned, was coordination of those resources effective? Did the mission assignments meet the original intent as briefed?

- **Planning** -- Were all resources assigned prepared for their tasks? Were team assignments made effectively?

- **Finance and Administration** -- Was documentation of team participation readily apparent? Were reimbursement procedures briefed, if applicable?

- **Logistics Support** -- Did the team have all of the necessary equipment to accomplish the missions assigned? Was the communications system utilized effective? If teams were in the field for an extended period, were items needed for refit of the team coordinated effectively?

f) Discussion of the Suggested Training to Sustain or Improve Team Skills.

g) Conclusion

c. EXECUTE.

1. Make sure everyone is comfortable. If people are uncomfortable or distracted, they will not participate.

2. Lead the discussion with questions. For example, if you have noted that had problems maintaining a good search pattern during the sortie, don't just tell the team that. Instead, ask something like "What happened when we started our line search?" or "How well do you think our line search went?". Whenever possible, let the team members tell YOU how things went, not the other way around. The less you talk, the better.

3. Keep the group focused. If team members start talking about things not related to the sortie, or the training objectives, it is your job to bring them back on track.

4. Analyze what the group is saying. If something went wrong (or right) find out why. Discuss how you could have done things better. Determine what training could help your team to improve.

5. Do not embarrass anyone. Make sure everyone feels free to bring up problems without being ridiculed. This is a sensitive issue, since you want team members to discuss their own mistakes. Everyone must understand that the purpose of the review is to make the team better.

6. Ensure performance is graded. By the end of the review, team members must clearly understand what was good, bad and average about their performance. The art of the review is to get the team members to accurately grade their own performance. In some cases, however, you may need to tell the team how they did -- especially with newer members.

7. Record the major points of the review, especially what areas need improvement. Use this information to plan future training.

Additional Information

More detailed information on this topic is available throughout the Ground Team Member and Leader Reference Text.

Evaluation Preparation

Setup: This task is graded by observing a team leader conduct a review after a training exercise or mission sortie. The team leader may use any materials he/she has on hand, including this book.

Brief Team Leader: Tell the team leader that he/she should conduct a review of the exercise or sortie just completed. Tell the team leader to complete all planning and preparation and begin the actual review in 45 minutes.

Evaluation

<u>Performance measures</u>	<u>Results</u>	
During the review, the team leader		
1. Chooses a comfortable review site with adequate light and protection from the elements.	P	F
2. Uses training aids where appropriate.	P	F
2. Introduces him/herself and states the training objectives	P	F

3. Leads the team through a discussion of:

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|--|---|---|
| a. What the mission was. | P | F |
| b. What happened during the sortie (in chronological order. | P | F |
| c. What were the Key Issue/Events that made the mission a success (or failure). | P | F |
| d. Analysis and Summary of team performance in terms of Command and Control, Intelligence and Search, Movement and Navigation, Recovery and Security, and Logistics and Personnel Support. | P | F |
| e. Suggested Training to Sustain or Improve Team Skills. | P | F |
| 4. Leads the discussion with questions. | P | F |
| 5. Keeps the group focused. | P | F |
| 6. Relates performance to published objectives. | P | F |
| 7. Records the results of the review | P | F |

Student must receive a pass on all performance measures to qualify in this task. If the individual fails any measure, show what was done wrong and how to do it correctly.